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PREPARATIONS FOR THE CONFERENCE

Latin American and Caribbean Consensus on Population and Development, adopted at the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Conference on Population and Development, Mexico City, 29 April-4 May 1993

Note by the Secretary-General of the Conference

1. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 1991/93 of 26 July 1991, invited the regional commissions to convene meetings or conferences to review experience gained in population policies and programmes in their regions as part of their contribution to the preparatory activities for the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development.

2. The Latin American and Caribbean Regional Conference on Population and Development, jointly organized by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), was held at Mexico City from 29 April to 4 May 1993. Annexed to the present document, in the languages of submission, is the Latin American and Caribbean Consensus on Population and Development, which was adopted at that Conference.

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Annex

LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN CONSENSUS ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT, ADOPTED AT THE LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT, HELD AT MEXICO CITY FROM 29 APRIL TO 4 MAY 1993*

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* Circulated in the languages of submission only.

I. THE SITUATION OF POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN IN THE EARLY 1990s

1. The 1974 World Population Conference at Bucharest and the World Population Plan of Action adopted by it represent a historical milestone in the consideration of the population issue at the world level. They stipulated that population policies should help to harmonize demographic trends with development trends, and they formulated important recommendations. At the Latin American and Caribbean level, these ideas began to gain recognition at the 1974 Regional Preparatory Conference at San José, which was followed by other meetings (Mexico City, 1975; Havana, 1983; International Conference on Population at Mexico City in 1984) and meetings such as those of the Committee of High-level Government Experts (CEGAN). It was in this context that country-based institutional frameworks were created to put into practice the recommendations of these meetings, which took the form of population councils or population units in ministries of planning. The Regional Conference on Population and Development at Mexico City in 1993 and the International Conference at Cairo in 1994 offer new opportunities for assessing the progress made and for furthering the debate and organizing future actions.

2. The 1980s represented a period of contrasting economic and social features for most Latin American and Caribbean countries. On the one hand, the region took a giant step backward in terms of real per capita output —which dropped, by the end of 1989, to its lowest level in 13 years— and experienced heavy macroeconomic imbalances and a deterioration of the social context as well. On the other hand, there were also some positive factors: in the realm of politics and institutions, the near-total prevalence of democratic and participatory systems; and in the social and demographic sphere, advances on various fronts, such as improved educational coverage, a decline in infant mortality and changes in reproductive patterns, which brought benefits in terms of maternal and child health. It is noteworthy that in spite of the economic setbacks experienced, there was a more widespread awareness of the need to change production patterns and labour relations to incorporate the region into the new international context. There was also a new sense that false dichotomies, such as those that would pit growth against equity, industry against agriculture, the domestic market against the external market, the State against private agents, or central planning against market forces, could be overcome.

3. Faced with the challenges presented by the crisis of the 1980s, and the difficulty of finding adequate solutions, the Governments have identified actions to promote the well-being of all segments of the population, while at the same time ensuring environmental sustainability in a democratic and participatory framework. The present goal is to change

production patterns as a linchpin for the region to achieve a growing and genuine competitive advantage, with a view to progressively raising productivity and creating prospects for effective equality of opportunity for the whole population. Genuine competitiveness requires social equity, together with increased investment in physical capital and a significant investment in human resources.

4. In this framework, the population issue can be seen from two angles: as a beneficiary of development and as a fundamental agent of the production process. This means that the key component, in addition to the training of human resources, is the latter's quality of life, and hence priority should be given to education, health and job training. The availability of more highly trained human resources is also a contributing factor in reducing the incidence of poverty, by virtue of favouring greater economic growth and offering better opportunities for entry into the workforce for all segments of the population, provided that social policies are strengthened as well in order to reduce prevailing societal inequalities. From this angle, the fast demographic growth rate and high poverty levels make it more difficult for the countries to improve the training and productivity of their labour force.

5. Looking at population as a beneficiary of development strategies, the subject of equity becomes even more relevant as one of the pillars of the relationship between population and development, taking into account the inequalities that exist within countries. The crisis of the 1980s, which exacerbated inequality of access to the fruits of development, has led to a rise in poverty, immersing vast segments of the Latin American and Caribbean population; from the demographic standpoint, this is expressed in differences in morbidity and mortality, particularly among mothers and children, and in territorial mobility and fertility patterns, according to social sectors and ethnic groups. In particular, it has been observed that there is a shortage of family planning programmes adapted to the principles of comprehensive assistance to mothers and children. The meeting of these demands together with others of a social nature (such as health or education), would not only meet the requirement of equity, but would have positive effects on human resources development.

6. One of the most outstanding demographic changes in Latin America and the Caribbean in the past 25 years is the pronounced decline in fertility, from 6 to 3.5 children per woman, which reduced the annual average population growth rate to 2% by the second half of the 1980s. This rate is projected to fall to 1.7% annually in the 1990s. At the same time, advances have been made with respect to mortality, as witnessed by the fact that life expectancy at birth has

increased from 57 to 69 years. These trends have also modified the age structure of the population, accentuating the demographic ageing process, whose effects will be felt in the medium term, in the first phase leading to an increase —in both absolute and relative terms— in the number of people of productive and childbearing age. Currently, the number of people entering the workforce is growing markedly, creating a situation rendered problematic by the prevalence of high unemployment rates among young people. Changes in age structure in many countries pose growing challenges in the areas of health and social security, largely as a result of high growth rates among the elderly population.

7. Added to these trends is the strong urbanization and metropolitanization process that has brought the region —which was predominantly rural in 1950— to its present situation, with 71% of its inhabitants living in urban areas, largely owing to heavy internal migratory flows. Latin America, with less than 10% of the world's population, has four out of its 10 biggest cities. This situation is not identical in all countries of the region, however, as some of them still have rural populations that account for more than 60% of the total.

8. It has been observed that development models thus far have promoted the territorial concentration of economic activities and of the population, with the consequent negative implications for comprehensive economic development and for social and regional equity. The Governments of the region are therefore called upon to ensure that their development strategies take into consideration their effects on territorial distribution, and to adopt measures to correct imbalances in this regard.

9. There is a growing trend towards international population mobility, mainly between the countries of the hemisphere, which is a product of the adjustment process the region is undergoing and of growing disparities between developing and developed countries. This mobility includes, besides the traditional movements of persons at all skill levels seeking better economic conditions, a large contingent of displaced persons and refugees from socio-political conflicts, and others who are returning to their countries of origin, basically motivated by ongoing democratization and pacification processes. However, variations may be observed in these patterns of territorial population mobility, as in the case of the Caribbean countries.

10. Moreover, the full demographic transition occurring in the region does not affect all countries equally. There are sharp contrasts between countries whose women have an average of nearly six children and others where the figure is less than two children; similarly, in some countries, life expectancy at

birth is less than 60 years, while in others it is nearly 75. These differences mean that there are countries whose population is growing at a rate of nearly 3% annually, and others where this rate is less than 1%. Similar and even greater disparities are seen in comparing geographic areas or social groups within countries; these disparities are the result of a lack of social equity which prevents the population from having full, non-discriminatory access to essential services such as education, health care, housing and social security.

11. Another sign of the lack of equity in the region is discrimination directed against women. From a demographic standpoint, this discrimination is reflected primarily in women's difficulty in exercising their reproductive rights - in other words, in the lack of access or options regarding contraceptive methods, mentioned earlier; the fact that women are given sole responsibility by family planning programmes; and the risk of high morbidity and mortality rates associated with pregnancy and childbirth. Special efforts must be made to prevent any lack of equity with respect to women's education and employment status. Consideration must also be given to the specific problems of displaced and refugee women and to violence against women in general.

12. The region is experiencing problems in the linkages between demographic trends, development and the environment in ecosystems in both urban and rural areas. These conflicts manifest themselves with differing degrees of intensity in different countries. Of particular importance is the urban situation, especially in the large metropolises, which are affected by the lack of basic services (water, sewerage, garbage collection) and by water and air pollution resulting from, inter alia, inadequate technologies for their control and insufficient investment in infrastructure, compounded by high urban population growth rates. Rural areas, in turn, suffer from deforestation and soil degradation in areas recently placed under cultivation and also in minifundio areas, where small farmers are forced to overexploit their land.

13. Sustainable development entails sustained economic growth, based on a change in production patterns combined with social policies -such as employment, population, education and health policies- which ensure social equity and place special emphasis on protecting the environment, all in a framework of democracy and respect for individual rights.

14. The formulation of population policies that are integrated with development strategies has been and will continue to be a particularly relevant factor. Despite the achievements in this area, some shortcomings can still be detected: a need for

a more accurate framework to deal with the form and meaning of the interaction between demographic variables and those of socio-economic development; a lack, on the one hand, of technical capacity in those responsible for economic and social planning, and, on the other, of firm political will to regard population as an endogenous variable in development policies, plans and programmes; and a lack of congruence, in some cases, between the objectives of socio-demographic policies and the effect of economic policies, strategies and programmes. In this sense, the State has an important role to play in coordinating the linkages between population and development.

15. External debt and its servicing place a heavy burden on Latin American and Caribbean countries that prevents resources from being allocated for development; specifically, it prevents those countries from giving priority to social programmes aimed at raising the population's standard of living. Consequently, regional consensus-building mechanisms must be created to release resources now used to repay and service debt for the implementation of social development programmes, including those relating to population and development.

16. International cooperation, both financial and technical, has played an important role in the promotion, study, discussion and implementation of population policies and programmes. However, there exists a notable disproportion between the needs and the resources available. Intraregional cooperation, for its part, is an effective instrument for meeting the common needs of different countries and complementing and strengthening country activities.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

II.1 Population growth and structure

1. Considering that the size, growth and composition of the population have a major impact on development with equity in the countries of the region, Governments are urged to reiterate and put into practice more fully their political commitment to incorporate demographic variables and, in particular, population growth and structure, at their various levels of policy-making and implementation.

2. Recognizing that recent decreases in fertility in most countries of the region will lead to an increase, in the next few decades, in the proportion of persons of working age, and that this will offer new opportunities by reducing the dependency ratio, but at the same time will present challenges with respect to the demand for job creation, Governments are asked to formulate, with the active support of non-governmental organizations and the private sector, training and employment programmes giving primary importance to young people and to persons affected by technological modernization, with a view to using these human resources to meet development targets.

3. Observing that many countries will continue to experience high rates of growth in the number of women of child-bearing age, together with high rates of adolescent fertility and low rates of contraceptive use, Governments are urged to anticipate demands, particularly those pertaining to reproductive health care.

4. Taking into account the demographic changes expected in most of the countries of the region, including a significant increase in the number of elderly persons, it is recommended that policies be adopted to achieve more equity in the distribution of resources among the various age groups in the fields of health care, education, social security and social participation and integration. The ageing process and the consequent high growth of the elderly population, together with the negative effects on this population of adjustment policies and the decline in public spending on social services, it is imperative that steps be taken to develop the institutional mechanisms needed in order to provide social security and health services to this segment of the population, taking into consideration the specific needs of its various age subgroups.

5. Considering that in the short and medium term the population of Latin America and the Caribbean will continue to be relatively young, Governments are urged to strengthen their efforts to provide care for their child and adolescent

populations.

6. Considering the inequality which exists in access to health services, Governments are called upon to assign higher political priority and devote more resources to a more equitable distribution of these services between urban and rural areas and among regions within countries and social and ethnic groups, together with ensuring their equitable distribution by gender and age, thereby attempting to reduce the sharp differences that exist in terms of morbidity, infant and maternal mortality and access to reproductive health services.

7. Recognizing also that national global indicators on population growth and demographic structures are important but often insufficient tools in formulating and implementing policies and programmes, it is recommended that the countries redouble their efforts to take due account of the specific features of various social, ethnic, age and subnational groups, in order to reveal the vast demographic heterogeneity underlying national aggregates and thus be able to apply policies that are appropriate to those realities.

II.2 Population distribution, development and the environment

1. Recognizing the negative aspects of the process of urban concentration, particularly in large metropolitan areas, it is recommended that decentralization of government decision-making be promoted through the participation of regional and local agents.

2. Considering the strong impact of productive development strategies on migratory flows, Governments are called upon, in designing such strategies, to increase the weight of migration-related considerations, in line with national targets for spatial distribution of the population.

3. Considering the depressed situation prevailing in many rural areas, and the consequent lack of employment opportunities and failure to meet basic needs in those areas, which hamper their ability to retain their population, it is recommended that Governments adopt measures to promote rural development in terms of both the location of production structures and the well-being of the population.

4. Noting that socio-political violence has triggered various forms of enforced territorial mobility of the population, Governments are requested to implement measures to protect the affected population, in particular the most vulnerable groups, such as women, the elderly, children, indigenous populations and ethnic minorities. The international community is also called upon to redouble its financial and technical cooperation efforts with a view to ensuring that repatriation and resettlement programmes are not reduced to merely humanitarian aid, but that they contribute to an effective integration of the displaced population into the economic and social development process.

5. Considering that policies and actions related to the environment have an impact on the population's health and spatial distribution, and that, in turn, population policies are linked in various ways with resource management and environmental conservation, Governments are urged to give priority attention to the quest for programmatic congruence between the two types of policies. In particular, with regard to the seriousness of the environmental problems being faced by a significant proportion of the region's urban population, the relevant levels of government are called upon to give priority attention to the extension and improvement of basic infrastructures for the provision of essential services such as drinking water and the disposal or treatment of waste, including household and industrial waste, because of the implications of such services for the state of health and, more generally, the well-being of the population.

6. Considering the risks of environmental degradation entailed by the rapid expansion of human settlements in fragile ecosystems, particularly in rural areas, in both continental and island countries, Governments, together with private agents, are urged to ensure the consideration of long-term action factors that may lead to irreversible environmental damage. Measures to this end should be conceived as part of a process that includes the opening up of alternative options, an adequate set of infrastructure conditions and stimuli to guide the expansion towards preferable zones, and environmentally sound modalities of settlement.

7. Considering that environmental deterioration results from the irrationality of current development patterns, as manifested in the prevalence of inappropriate technologies and consumption patterns, mainly among industrialized countries and privileged minorities in developing countries, and in the worsening standards of living of vast sectors of the population, and that demographic growth is not the main cause of such deterioration, Governments are urged to adopt environmentally sustainable development strategies and, in that context, to give due priority to social programmes and policies, including those on population and education.

8. Considering that the various social actors share responsibility for preserving the environment, Governments are urged to reinforce and expand elements which promote awareness and knowledge about linkages between population variables and environmental variables in education and communication programmes, whether public or private, formal or non-formal. Actions should therefore be grounded on the community, organized groups and the crucial role played by families, and should take into account the important role played by women. What should be created is an ecological awareness of the need to preserve the environment and a clear understanding of the consequences of practices that might be harmful to resources and to the environment, especially those practices that are immediately related to health, education, social well-being and patterns of human settlement.

II.3 Women and population dynamics

1. Considering that stereotypes, prejudices and negative attitudes regarding women and their role in contemporary society persist in the countries of the region, and impede the effective exercise of women's reproductive rights, Governments are urged to take effective measures designed to eliminate such attitudes by promoting changes in forms of socialization, in the mass media and in formal and non-formal education.

2. Considering that fuller integration into the educational system and raising women's level of education are crucial to upgrading their social status, that they are decisive factors in reducing maternal and infant mortality and that they influence reproductive behaviour by affecting the age at which unions first form and the number of children they have, Governments are urged to allocate more resources for the development of programmes that encourage the integration and uninterrupted attendance of women in the educational system, both inside and outside the classroom, particularly through population education and communication programmes, which should incorporate the gender perspective.

3. Considering that, in general, women have a low rate of participation in the labour market and are in an unfavourable position within it, in terms of earning lower wages, having less access to social security benefits, representing a larger share of the informal sector and having higher unemployment rates; that certain activities carried out by the female population are undervalued; and that this situation is aggravated by the existence of a high percentage of women heads of household and the fact that many elderly women live alone, Governments and the private sector are urged to facilitate the incorporation of women into the working world on an equal footing with the rest of the population and, in particular, to ensure their access to existing social security programmes.

4. Recognizing that most national and international efforts to lower fertility are aimed almost exclusively at women's reproductive behaviour, Governments are urged to adopt and promote approaches that seek to introduce a gender equity criterion in this area.

5. Taking into account that reproductive rights include that of non-life-threatening maternity, it is recommended that Governments provide universal access to sex education, health programmes, family planning and pre-natal, obstetrical and post-natal care, according priority to the most vulnerable groups of women and, in particular, to the care and prevention of teenage pregnancy, and incorporating the gender perspective, particularly in the case of teenage mothers.

6. Considering that abortion is a major public health issue in the countries of the region and that, while various views are held in this regard, none of them accepts abortion as a method of regulating fertility, generally speaking, it is recommended that Governments devote greater attention to the study and follow-up of this issue, with a view to evaluating how prevalent abortion really is and its impact on the health of women and their families; Governments should also promote universal access to proper guidance on how to prevent unwanted pregnancies.

7. Considering that the family is the environment which defines the various types of organization of daily life and is, in large part, at the root of gender inequalities, which can lead to forms of violence, Governments are urged to incorporate this aspect into population policies and programmes.

8. Considering that the effectiveness of programmes to achieve gender equity invariably requires strong political will that promotes the solid participation of all sectors of society, it is recommended that, to this end, Governments seek to involve not only the public sector but also non-governmental groups active in the social sphere and the private sector.

9. Considering that sweeping legislative changes have been introduced in the region with a view to eliminating inequalities and discrimination against women as concerns their rights, it is recommended that Governments promote the dissemination of such rights and establish the necessary mechanisms for their exercise, ensuring compliance with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, designing legal mechanisms to guarantee the equality of pregnant women in the job market and prohibiting the discriminatory work restrictions currently enforced in some countries.

10. Considering the region's experience in the development of women's programmes and the importance of gender-conscious population education and research in formulating further proposals for action, Governments are urged to evaluate the achievements made and to promote the training of qualified personnel in the integration of the gender perspective, incorporating it into population curricula and encouraging research into the influence of gender inequality on the processes of development and demographic change.

II.4 Population policies and programmes

1. Considering the essential role of population variables in the task of changing production patterns with social equity in pluralistic, democratic societies, consistent with the basic criteria of environmental sustainability, as well as the right to national sovereignty, Governments are urged, when adopting and implementing population policies, to faithfully reflect the true situation of each country and its various social strata with a view to formulating objectives and targets that, in keeping with the recommendations of Agenda 21, promote the preservation of the ecosystems constituting their national geography and the sound exploitation of their resources.

2. Taking into account that the existing institutional order in the countries of the region is based on respect for individual rights, it is recommended that, beyond basic rights such as education and health care, the effective and equitable exercise of individual rights in areas of demographic concern, especially reproductive behaviour, be promoted in accordance with individual convictions, principles or beliefs.

3. Considering the desirability of having an institutional body responsible for the formulation and implementation of population policy, and considering the multisectoral nature of such policy and the experience of the countries of the region in this area, it is recommended that Governments establish or strengthen the institutional and legal frameworks necessary to ensure the genuine integration of these policies into development strategies. To that end, the experience of each country should be evaluated.

4. Bearing in mind respect for the principle of individual freedom of choice, population education and communication programmes are basic tools for providing guidance and information on this principle. It is therefore recommended that Governments continue implementing such programmes, while respecting the population's cultural diversity and making the necessary changes in order to gear their programmes accordingly. To this end, the evaluation component of these programmes and the exchange of experiences among the countries of the region must be strengthened.

5. Reiterating the need to take an integrated approach in formulating development strategies, and considering that efforts to integrate demographic variables into development planning have been only partially successful, Governments are urged to weigh their experiences and redouble their efforts to give express consideration in their development programmes, in particular at regional and local levels, to both the relevant demographic variables and the impact their development programmes are expected to have on population dynamics.

Reaffirming that national Governments are primarily responsible for designing, implementing and evaluating population policies and programmes, it is recommended that these be designed with a view to active participation by legislatures, local governments, social groups, community organizations and non-governmental organizations, which will bolster the viability and effectiveness of such policies and programmes and, at the same time, help to consolidate democratic systems. To this end, population policies must clearly indicate that the community and non-governmental organizations are equal participants, along with politicians and experts, in policy design, implementation and follow-up. Broad national consensus on population policies is required if they are to have the legitimacy needed for their effective implementation.

7. Bearing in mind the different socio-economic situation of various groups according to age and gender -such as children, youth, women and men of reproductive age and the elderly-, specific policies and programmes must be identified for these groups which emphasize efforts to facilitate their integration in society.

8. Considering that a large and, in many cases, growing part of Latin American and Caribbean society is living in poverty or indigence, Governments are requested to increase government spending on social sectors, including population programmes.

9. Taking into account that in the region various indigenous peoples have survived in precarious, marginal living conditions and, in many cases, run the risk of extinction, Governments are urged to adopt, in the short term, population policies and programmes for these groups which consider the need to safeguard and protect the specific cultural traits of peoples, while recognizing and respecting their space, land, language, and systems of values and beliefs. Governments are also invited to incorporate into their sustainable development strategies the indigenous knowledge accumulated over generations about the conservation of land, natural resources and the environment.

II.5 Development, health, family planning and well-being

1. Considering that the family plays a fundamental role in the reproduction and socialization of future generations, Governments are requested to support the family as an institution through specific policies that take into account changes in its form, its organization and its size and structure. In this connection, family life education, for both men and women, should be promoted through all available means and particularly through population education.

2. Recognizing that the opportunity to regulate fertility is a universally recognized human right, it is recommended that Governments ensure the full exercise of this right as one of their prime objectives and provide the accurate, complete information necessary for that purpose. Accordingly, they should provide access to family planning services, expand their coverage and improve their quality, providing care without restriction to all men and women who want it, in a framework of full respect for individual freedoms and for the diversity of socio-cultural and religious beliefs and values.

3. Recognizing that family planning programmes, because they help to reduce high-risk pregnancy, cannot be detached from social policies and, in particular, health and education programmes, it is recommended that they be designed as tools for providing health care throughout the reproductive cycle. In this regard, family planning objectives should include reducing maternal and infant morbidity and mortality, lowering the risks of teenage pregnancy and abortion, and preventing sexually transmitted diseases.

4. Bearing in mind that acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) is a source of growing concern in the countries of the region and that existing projections suggest a significant increase in its incidence in the coming years, and considering also that this syndrome is related to sexual and reproductive behaviour, Governments are urged to incorporate measures into reproductive health, population education and family planning programmes as a matter of priority with the aim of preventing its spread and ensuring that patients receive adequate medical care and non-discriminatory treatment.

5. Taking into account that there are still very pronounced social disparities in most countries as regards, inter alia, income, health, education and place of residence, it is recommended that Governments, in collaboration with non-governmental organizations and the private sector, undertake

family planning initiatives, aimed primarily at making this service accessible to the most disadvantaged groups, thereby helping to bring about greater social equity.

6. Considering that teenage pregnancy gives cause for concern because of its impact on maternal and child health, especially in view of the high incidence of maternal morbidity and mortality, and because of its psychological and social repercussions, such as the disruption of schooling, its interference with the mother's training to enter the labour market and the difficulties it entails for the maintenance of unions, Governments are urged to devote their efforts, on a priority basis, to designing and adopting global reproductive health care models for teenagers, focusing particular attention on population education, with emphasis on family life education, comprehensive sex education and family planning. The design of these models should be tailored to the socio-cultural context in which they are applied. Governments are also urged to reconsider regulations restricting teenagers' access to birth control methods. The launching of programmes to address the psychological and social consequences of teenage pregnancy, making every effort to avoid disrupting the mother's schooling and to facilitate her incorporation into the labour market, is also recommended.

7. Considering the right of individuals, couples and unions to have access to a broad range of methods for regulating their fertility, which, together with the help of professional counseling in the selection of the method most suited to the user's socio-cultural and personal situation, largely determines the quality and effectiveness of family planning services, Governments are urged to devote special attention to ensuring the genuine availability of a wide variety of contraceptive options and providing information about what those options involve. It is also necessary to improve the technical skills of service providers, their interpersonal relationship with users and the structure and organization of follow-up services and mechanisms.

8. Considering that tubal ligation is very common in certain countries of the region and the concern that this has aroused, as it is an irreversible decision that should be taken voluntarily, since it might be regretted at a different stage in life, it is recommended that Governments encourage, at all levels at which such services are provided, the strengthening of advisory mechanisms to inform potential users of sterilization about the existence of alternative contraceptive methods and the consequences of choosing a permanent method.

Governments should establish criteria in this regard and clear regulations for their application, and should ensure effective compliance with them.

9. Considering the above-mentioned desirability of having a broad range of available contraceptive methods to choose from, it is recommended that support be given to bio-medical research for the development of contraceptives that are not hazardous to human health, and that local production thereof be expanded. These actions should be carried out in a manner that also reflects the perspective of the social sciences and human behavioural sciences. International assistance, subject to the approval of the competent national bodies, is an important means of strengthening these efforts.

10. Taking into account that some population groups show a preference for methods based on periodic abstinence, it is recommended that research be extended to cover such methods, seeking to develop more effective procedures for detecting the time of ovulation; to that end, attention must be focused on both the accuracy and simplicity of such methods and the ease with which knowledge about them can be transmitted to the population.

11. Taking into account current trends towards the decentralization of decision-making about social policy and of its management, and recognizing that maternal and child health and family planning programmes are a part of such social policy, Governments are urged to implement a thoroughgoing policy in this regard, allowing for ever greater participation of provincial, departmental and municipal governments; and ensuring sufficient availability of resources. It will also be extremely important to open up channels of communication and to share leadership responsibilities with community organizations, women's associations, non-governmental organizations and the private sector.

12. Recognizing that, although for purposes of implementing programmes it may be desirable to set targets as to either the number of users or fertility rates, this should not interfere with the exercise of individual freedoms, it is recommended that Governments refrain from establishing quotas for the number of persons that may use the services provided.

13. Considering that, in vast segments of the region's population, men's active involvement in decisions about family planning and the use of contraceptive methods is still low and that there is even opposition to contraceptive use by women, it is

recommended that specific information, education and communication strategies be introduced in order to rectify this situation. In addition, efforts must be made to promote the education of men in responsible fatherhood and the development and use of contraceptive methods that can be used by men.

14. Considering that information, communication and education on population issues play a decisive role in decision-making concerning reproductive behaviour, Governments are urged to launch programmes in this area or strengthen those already in place. In particular, it is recommended that population education programmes emphasizing preparation for family life and sex education be more rapidly institutionalized in the educational system.

15. Considering that one of the goals of family planning should be to support couples in their efforts to maintain the desired family size, and recognizing the significant progress made by biotechnology in the development of treatments for infertility and assisted fertility, Governments are urged, within their means and their realistic health infrastructure capacities, to provide such services to individuals and support research in this field, within the framework of internationally accepted ethical principles and standards.

16. Considering that future progress in family planning will depend largely on an improved understanding of reality, it is recommended that research in the field be promoted, in particular research on the socio-cultural factors that influence fertility and the dynamics of contraceptive use. It is further recommended that operational research be stepped up with a view to improving the quality of services and of population education and communication programmes.

II.6 International migration and development

1. Considering that international migration is a phenomenon that has existed throughout history and will continue to exist owing to political, economic and social disparities between countries, and recognizing that such migration consists, in large part, of undocumented persons who have little formal education and are subjected to discriminatory treatment in the places of transit and destination, Governments of the countries of origin and destination are urged to promote the institutional establishment of international agreements that set forth the necessary norms to oversee the situation of migrant workers and their families and ensure respect for their rights as recognized in various international instruments and conventions.

2. Considering also that some countries receiving immigrants are very small in size, and that uncontrolled immigration has an enormous impact on the demographic and socio-economic structure of these small countries, and particularly in small island developing countries, it is recommended that international bodies recognize the need for, and give support to, ongoing activities related to the measurement and analysis of the impact of these movements on demographic and economic changes. This could enable Governments to better plan and structure programmes to meet basic needs, provide basic services and enhance the quality of life of the population.

3. Also considering the importance of emigration of professionals and technicians and the problems which this type of reverse transfer of technology poses for developing countries, it is recommended that the Governments of developed and developing countries cooperate in establishing adequate infrastructures and in programming development and training human resources in accordance with the needs and priorities of economic and social development, which would generate a suitable national framework that would reduce structural and social imbalances and favour economic and social development, which, in turn, would undoubtedly encourage professionals and technicians to remain in their home countries.

4. Taking into account that qualified human resources are indispensable for furthering development in the region, there is an urgent need for the international community —and international organizations— to seek ways of promoting scientific and technical cooperation between developed and developing countries, with a view to intensifying the transfer of technology to developing countries, under just and

favourable conditions, and to facilitating its dissemination and use in those countries. It is recommended that Governments, in accordance with their national situations and legislation, establish programmes to promote the return and linkage of qualified human resources, for the sake of transferring the knowledge and information needed by their countries of origin.

5. Considering the importance, in some countries of the region, of remittances from abroad for the household economies of groups living in poverty, it is recommended that Governments devise ways of providing guidance to the beneficiary families in the use of savings plans, strengthening their capacity for project management and execution, on a basis of respect for the relevant national legislation.

6. Considering the economic and social integration schemes being implemented at the regional and subregional levels and their consequences for the mobility of individuals within these new spatial configurations and for the operation of national migration policies, it is recommended that Governments progress in cooperating and exchanging information on matters concerning the norms regulating the entry and length of stay of individuals, and on their migration policies.

7. Taking into account that these integration schemes result in the formation of socio-economic areas which are broader than those of a single, isolated country, increasing the mobility of resources, Governments are urged to design and elaborate innovative ways of training, recovering and efficiently using the region's human resources.

8. Considering the frequency of the migration of refugees and of repatriation processes among the countries of the region, Governments are urged to formulate and implement economic and social programmes to guarantee the appropriate reabsorption of these populations; in addition, the international community is invited to continue to develop humanitarian aid and economic and social integration programmes.

9. In view of the serious lack of information and knowledge on trends and policies regarding international migration, it is recommended that the relevant international bodies collaborate with the countries in improving their sources of information, facilitating the exchange of data and research results, and elaborating periodic national and regional reports on international migration which provide adequate information for the formulation of policies and programmes in this field.

II.7 Training, data production and research

1. Recognizing the diversity of demographic situations in the region and the need for qualified professionals to address the problems that arise from these different situations, and at the same time taking into account the worsening conditions in which the very small number of regional and national centres and institutions currently operate, it is recommended that Governments and the international community increase their contributions for the training of demographers and experts in the field of population.

2. Considering the importance of demographic issues in many disciplines in the social and biological sciences, Governments are requested, within the existing university structure, to promote the inclusion of courses on demographic variables into the curricula of these disciplines. At the same time, publications and textbooks containing up-to-date demographic knowledge that is relevant to the region should be disseminated.

3. Taking into account that both the Caribbean countries and the Central American countries have expressed an urgent need to increase the availability of demographers, Governments and cooperation agencies are urged to strengthen national and subregional educational infrastructures in demography and population studies.

4. Considering that the availability of adequate socio-demographic information is crucial for sectoral and local development programmes and projects, the Governments of the region are urged to make efforts to strengthen national and regional statistical offices as a precondition for improving their sources and systems of demographic information, with special emphasis on vital statistics and other existing administrative records, with a view to substantiating socio-demographic research and regular follow-up and study of demographic characteristics and trends, particularly in the areas of health, fertility and contraception. Likewise, it is recommended that technical cooperation, both horizontal and with international organizations specializing in demographic research and statistics, be developed in order to contribute to diagnoses and programmes of action targeting vulnerable population groups.

5. Considering that in order to further integrate population policies into development plans and programmes, information must be more readily available and knowledge of the

relationships between demographic and socio-economic variables must be enhanced, it is recommended that Governments establish an information and data collection and analysis network that takes current development strategies into account in formulating policy and implementing population programmes; Governments should also foster closer interaction between policy makers and researchers in the population field.

6. Recognizing that demographic research and population studies have been —with very few exceptions— dependent on the availability of supplementary financial resources, which have almost always come from the outside, or that they have been treated as a chapter or an extension of international research programmes, countries are urged to undertake, notwithstanding the continuation of current arrangements, regional and subregional efforts to expand and deepen their knowledge geared to a better understanding of key aspects of population dynamics, and their variables and socio-economic and cultural contextual determinants, as well as the relationship between population, the environment and poverty. Existing national and regional networks of institutions and ad hoc inter-agency agreements or such other mechanisms as are deemed appropriate can be used to this end.

7. In order to further integrate population policies in development plans and programmes, and recognizing the significant role of political will in facilitating the achievement of these objectives, Governments are urged to explore, with the assistance of international intergovernmental and non-governmental bodies, innovative methods of raising awareness among political leaders, planners and policy-makers of the interrelationship between population and development and the need to incorporate population issues in social and economic programmes.

8. Taking into account that new internal migration patterns are emerging in the region which have not yet been looked into sufficiently, and that the policies applied so far to influence the spatial distribution of the population have not been adequately assessed, Governments are called upon to promote research and studies on this matter, in coordination with universities, academic centres and other non-governmental organizations.

9. Noting that the problems of the environment transcend conventional political and administrative boundaries, Governments are requested to recognize ecosystems, in conducting studies on demographic trends and territorial

mobility of the population, as units of analysis, incorporating them into the pertinent chapters of the statistical system. This approach is particularly relevant in those subregions where regional or border integration initiatives are being taken.

9. Considering that the international community has stressed the importance of sustainable development, as set out in Agenda 21, and that the sustainability of development simultaneously depends on production and consumption patterns, demographic trends and the dynamic linkages between the two; and bearing in mind that the accumulated knowledge on these matters is still insufficient, it is considered essential to promote interdisciplinary studies, at national and subnational levels, to incorporate these linkages into the design of development policies and programmes.

II.8 International cooperation in the population field

1. Recognizing that the mobilization of international financial and technical resources is essential to ensure the implementation of the recommendations contained in this Consensus, Governments of the developed countries members of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), other bilateral donors and global and regional multilateral organizations are urged to substantially increase their allocations of resources for population assistance.

2. Considering that cooperation needs in the population sector are growing, dynamic and require ongoing attention, it is recommended that official development assistance include specific, increasing appropriations for population activities to the year 2000. Given the nature of this topic, the use of such appropriations should be based on flexible criteria, allowing for their adaptation to the numerous problems in this sector.

3. Taking into account the experience acquired by a number of Latin American and Caribbean countries in the design and implementation of policies and programmes in the various areas covered by this Consensus, it is recommended that Governments increase technical cooperation activities between countries of the region, and international organizations are urged to support such activities.

4. Bearing in mind that there has been a real decrease in the resources of the Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE) and that this seriously limits the attention that can be given to current and future training and research needs in the field of population and development, primarily in Central America and the Caribbean, it is recommended that the Presiding Officers of Committee of the High-level Government Experts (CEGAN), in consultation with the ECLAC secretariat, explore and investigate new forms and sources of financing to strengthen CELADE in order to benefit countries and satisfy their requirements.

5. Taking into account the national, regional, interregional and global dimensions of the recommendations adopted, member countries call upon the relevant national and multilateral institutions to implement them according to their capacity and to adopt the legislation required for their implementation.

6. The members and associate members take into account the role of non-governmental organizations in the implementation of the

recommendations contained in the present Consensus and reiterate their support for mechanisms to ensure democratic participation in the identification, preparation and implementation of policies, programmes and projects, with a view to involving the beneficiaries thereof directly.

7. Considering the importance of this Consensus, the member States decide to promote the adoption of a regional plan of action based on the recommendations contained herein, request the ECLAC secretariat to elaborate a draft thereof, and invite ECLAC to seek the collaboration of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The member States also ask the Presiding Officers of CEGAN and all interested countries to take measures to establish communication mechanisms and to provide the ECLAC secretariat with appropriate guidelines. This plan will be presented at the twenty-fifth session of ECLAC, to be held at Cartagena, Colombia, and submitted as a contribution to the preparatory process for the International Conference on Population and Development, to be held at Cairo in September 1994.

8. Taking into account the forthcoming International Conference on Population and Development, to be held at Cairo in September 1994, the Governments of the region pledge to participate actively in it by contributing to the discussion of policies from their national viewpoints and from a regional perspective, and working to ensure that the updated World Population Plan of Action reflects the specific characteristics of Latin America and the Caribbean, in harmony with those of other developing regions and with the general interests of the rest of the world.

9. In view of the new dimension that will infuse the population and development issue following the Cairo International Conference, the States Members of the United Nations are urged to take the necessary institutional steps to endow UNFPA with the instruments it needs to apply the World Population Plan of Action, and ECLAC and CELADE with similar instruments for action at the regional level.

10. Mindful that international population and development issues, including environmental concerns, have an impact on all member and associate member countries of ECLAC, and further mindful that the contributions in particular of associate member countries to international cooperation in population and development enhance the international process in addressing these issues while also assisting these countries in their socio-economic development, the Preparatory Committee of the

International Conference on Population and Development is urged to include in its rules of procedure provisions for extending observer status in the preparatory process and at the International Conference on Population and Development to associate members of regional economic commissions, consistent with the extension of such a status to these countries at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

11. By adopting this Consensus, the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean express their commitment to apply their recommendations and, in this context, to take the necessary steps to that end, at the institutional level and in the domestic mobilization of resources within the prioritization of social development and comprehensive assistance to women and children.